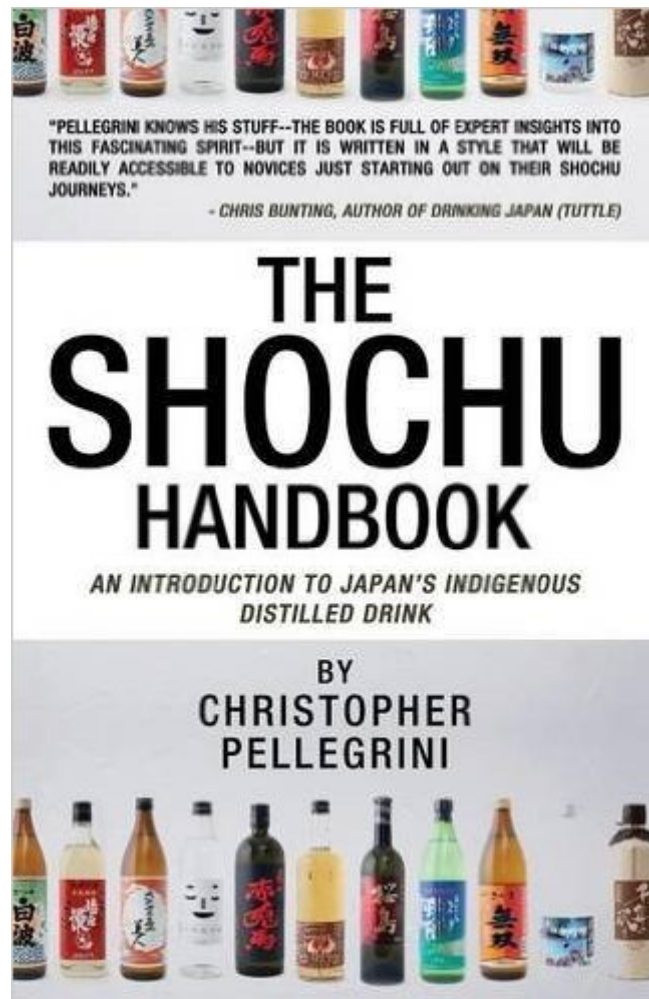


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# The Shochu Handbook - An Introduction To Japan's Indigenous Distilled Drink



## Synopsis

For hundreds of years, shochu and awamori have dwelled near the center of Japan's vaunted culinary traditions. Despite outselling most other alcoholic beverages in Japan, however, these premium distilled treats have largely remained hidden from the rest of the world. But that is beginning to change. Written by licensed sommelier and longtime Japan resident, Christopher Pellegrini, *The Shochu Handbook* is the first major reference published on the subject in a language other than Japanese. Illustrated with dozens of beautiful photographs, the book covers everything from how distilled beverages arrived in Japan to a step-by-step overview of the distilling process. There are also detailed chapters devoted to deciphering bottle labels, food pairing, serving styles, and speaking the language of these divine drinks. Packed with information, *The Shochu Handbook* also includes an extensive list of recommended bottles, a chapter devoted to cocktail and homemade liqueur recipes, and Japanese-English language assistance for everything from ordering shochu in a bar to telling the difference between single-distilled and multiple-distilled drinks. This book is essential for Japanese food enthusiasts, restaurateurs, distributors, journalists, retailers, beverage professionals, and everyone in between.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A friend introduced me to Christopher Pellegrini's informative *Shochu Handbook* via a Kickstarter campaign that I am proud to say I contributed to. I have been a fan of shochu for some time, but I have been woefully uninformed about it, so the timing seemed right for an English language book

about it. In fact Pellegrini points out that shochu eclipsed nihonshu sales during the third "shochu boom" in 2003 and the gap has continued to grow since then; in 2009 one million kiloliters of shochu was shipped while only 634,000 by nihonshu brewers. In the preface, the readers learns about Pellegrini's love of shochu, which resulted in becoming one of the few non Japanese shochu sommelier certificate holders from the Sake Service Institute. The introduction points out the chapters that may of the most interest to readers who can sample shochu in Japan and those who live outside. Chapter One, answers "What is shochu?" and Pellegrini explains how shochu differs from nihonshu (distilled vs. brewed). This is followed by "How is honkaku shochu unique?" (Chapter Two), where he compares shochu to different types of clear alcohol like vodka, soju (Korean liquor), Awamori (Okinawa alcohol), and rum. Chapter Three explains "How is shochu made?" I was surprised to learn in Chapter Four, "Types of shochu," to learn that there are more than 50 types of ingredients, but Pellegrini focuses on the most popular: potato, barely, rice, brown sugar, and buckwheat. I personally found Chapter Five "Reading the label," very useful. In addition, I wasn't aware of the different ways that shochu is served (Chapter Six "How to serve shochu"). There were lots of good suggestions Chapter Seven "Shochu pairing and sharing" and Chapter Eight "Recommended shochu.

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